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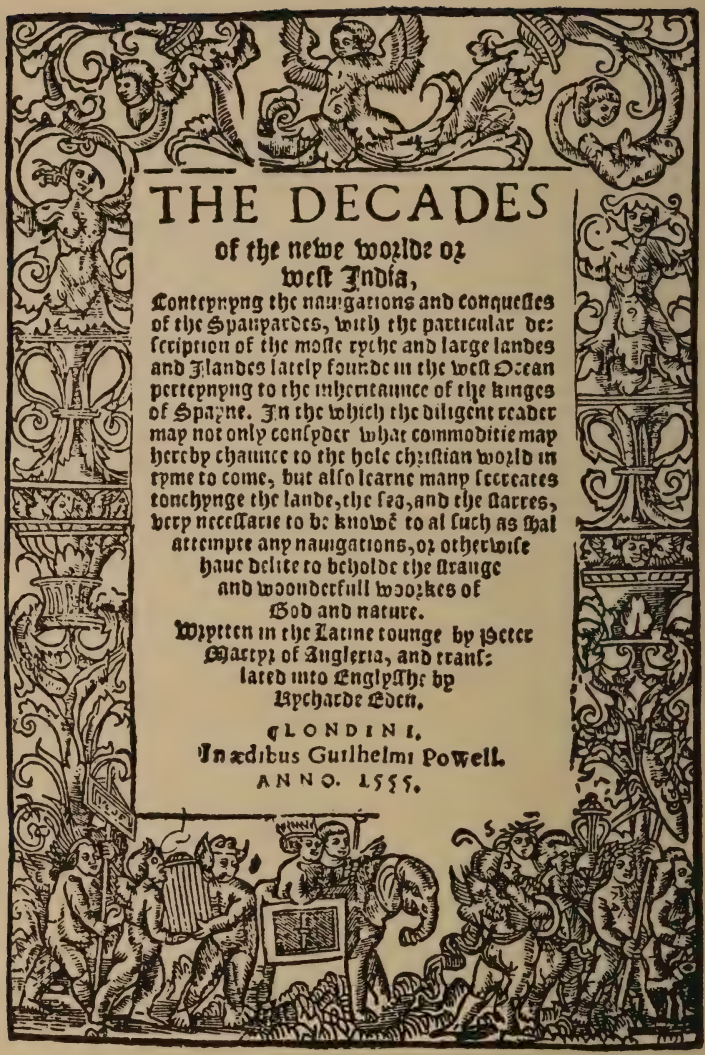


THE EARLIEST COLLECTION OF VOYAGES IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

In this book Richard Eden collected some of the important writings of Peter Martyr, Oviedo, Gomara, Vespuccius and the Bull of Demarcation by Pope Alexander VI.

THE WHYS AND WHEREFORES
OF THE
WILLIAM L. CLEMENTS LIBRARY

A Brief Essay on Book-Collecting
as a Fine Art

By Randolph G. Adams

ANN ARBOR
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
MCMXXV

FOREWORD

THIS little essay is adapted with some changes from an interview which appeared in the *Michigan Daily* for May 24, 1925. That interview was given with great reluctance after repeated requests, and it is now put in more permanent form in response to a demand for some such brief interpretation of the Library. There is no thought that it contains any contribution to the subject of which it treats. It is intended for those who daily visit the Library with no great previous knowledge of its function, and who ask many questions which it is perfectly right and natural they should ask. If what is written here helps even in a small way to answer those questions, it will have fulfilled its purpose. The illustrations and initials are from books in the Library.

THE WHY AND WHEREFORES OF THE WILLIAM L. CLEMENTS LIBRARY.

AMONG the greatest problems of modern civilization is the proper application of the surplus energy of human beings. That surplus has come largely through the shortened hours of labor made possible by applied science. The overcrowded condition of all our universities is only one evidence of the fact that humanity, in America certainly, has decided to devote a greater amount of its leisure than ever before to the things of the mind. Ignorant though they are of what they come to seek, and unsatisfactory as are the methods by which the modern university is handling these swarms of students, the fact is nevertheless undeniable that Americans have more time than ever before which, if they choose, they might devote to matters of culture. Our problem is to help create a civilization which does not degenerate under that leisure. It is one of the most dangerous situations which confronts any nation that has reached an advanced stage of human development.

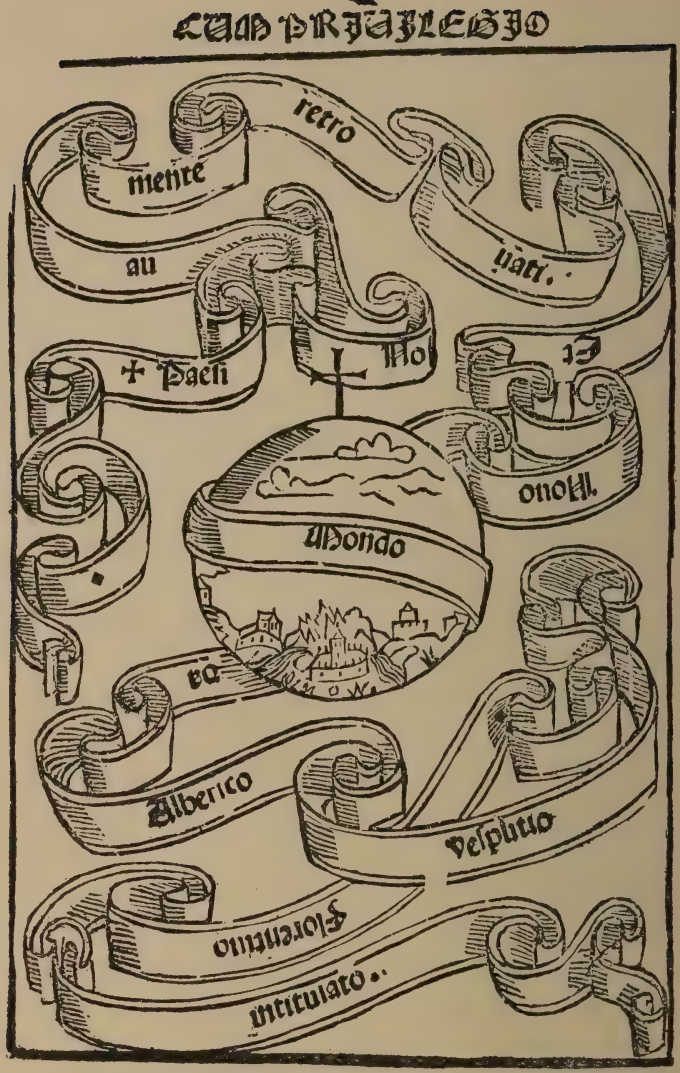
To explain the William L. Clements Library in a few paragraphs is not simple. I hope I shall not offend anyone if I suggest that in many cases it is too much like trying to teach an unmusical person to play the piano in the course of an afternoon. But it is so increasingly evident that this Library,

and all such libraries, have an important contribution to make to our social life, to the safeguarding of our civilization, that I shall venture upon the task. Moreover, when the question has been fairly put and in good spirit, as to just what the Library is all about, anyone who really wants to know is entitled to a fair answer. As Custodian of a library which exists because a man knew how to employ his spare time, I am deeply concerned with making clear the debt which humanity owes to all such men. I believe if more people were book-collectors two things would result of great benefit to humanity. In the first place these people would become so fascinated they would have no time for more harmful dissipations. But second and more important, they would leave behind them materials with which men may work in freeing the human mentality from the shackles of ignorance, superstition and prejudice.

To most people a library is a piece of public property which should serve the whole of the community in which it stands. It should supply them with such books as they need, as efficiently as possible and without any meticulous regard for what happens to the books. Any book which has been worn out in public service has fulfilled its purpose, and since the process of printing has been so perfected in recent years, the replacement of the book ought to be relatively easy. We are taught in America that education is our birthright, and therefore we seem to conclude that whatever a

library can do to serve our educational needs, that we may fairly demand it shall perform for us. I am not at all sure that this is the correct conception of the ordinary public or university or free library, but it does seem to be the conception held by most of its patrons.

Therefore, when a library appears on a University campus which does not at all comply with these notions of what a library ought to be and do, there is bound to be a certain amount of wonderment, and, in less well informed quarters, a certain amount of critical comment. To those lovers of books whom this Library is especially intended to serve, such an interpretation as I shall try to present seems alike unnecessary and inappropriate. Those who really understand and appreciate such a library are apt to feel that it is quite useless to defend it to people who cannot enjoy it without defense. But I shall not take that attitude, because I am interested in increasing the number of those who can share in the joys of the collection. This does not mean that I believe we can make book-lovers. But I firmly believe there are potential book-lovers, necessarily men of a sensitive nature, who are overwhelmed by the physical and intellectual brutality of the modern University. To such men the library might become a refuge from the appalling crudeness of mob education, public hazing and initiations, and organized semi-professional college athletics. But this is one of



TITLE-PAGE OF EARLIEST COLLECTION OF VOYAGES RELATING TO AMERICA

This book contains the accounts of the voyages of Casa da Mosto, Vasco da Gama, Cabral, Columbus, Pinzon, Vespuccius, and others. It was printed at Venice in 1507.

the functions of the Library which it takes years to develop.

It is my firm belief that every University should strive to capitalize the enthusiasm of the book-collector and tempt him by providing generously to care for whatever he has spent his life collecting. If more book-collectors could see some genuine appreciation of their hobbies in university circles, they would naturally be much more inclined to entrust their treasures to those universities. In our University Library the collection of Dr. Lucius L. Hubbard is further evidence of the reward which comes to the librarian who appreciates the collector's viewpoint. If all universities would establish these cultural libraries with due regard to the feeling that the original collector had for his books, I have an idea that it would return excellent dividends.

To book-lovers the idea of the William L. Clements Library is not new—indeed, it is very old. But it is a new idea to the multitude, and it is the multitude with which we are dealing. The individual who dares to introduce a new idea to the multitude necessarily has to endure years of persecution, even though his idea is ultimately of immense benefit to civilization. Men are today at work in our laboratories of chemistry and physics who would have been burned at the stake in the middle ages for experiments they perform every day. Today our economists play in public with ideas for which but a short century ago they would

have been deported to a penal colony. Every new department of human knowledge has to fight for its existence against the bitter prejudices of the multitude. But the world makes its progress because thinking men go steadily on without heeding the assaults of those who attack what they will not tarry to understand. A Library which violates all the preconceived ideas of the multitude of what a library should do must expect a certain amount of criticism.

But what *is* this new department which the donor of the William L. Clements Library has established? What does it propose to do that is not already being done? I should say that it is to stimulate the fine art of book-collecting and to cultivate an interest in the science of bibliography. Of course a primary purpose of the library is to promote the study of American history, but we have a department of history at the university which has been doing that for decades, and so, although that is one of the first functions of the library, there is nothing new about it. The science of bibliography is worthy of a much more extended consideration than I can give it in an essay which I would rather devote to book-collecting as a fine art.

I think no one will deny that among the most precious possessions of the human race are its writings and records preserved in book-form. An incalculable amount has been lost. Let us take the three principal writers of Greek tragedy as our

examples. Sophocles wrote about a hundred plays —only seven are known to us. About seventy-five tragedies are attributed to Euripides—of which barely twenty survive. Aeschylus wrote more than a hundred dramas—of which only six have come down to us. The loss of this literature may be in a large measure due to the accidental destruction of the first Alexandrian Library by Julius Caesar, and the intentional burning of the second great Alexandrian Library by certain fanatical Christian sects of the fourth century, A.D. The historian Gibbon exonerated the Caliph Omar from his fabled responsibility for this destruction more than a hundred years ago, and modern research supports Gibbon. It would be easy to go on and mention the burning of the great library of the Caliphs by the so-called Christian King Ferdinand of Castile, or to dig again in the ashes of the first indigenous American literature of which the soldier of Cortez made a bonfire in the City of Mexica in 1520. The Mexican bibliographer, Icazbalceta has relieved Archbishop Zumárraga, whom Prescott charged with this crime, from the odium of this destruction of the Aztec manuscripts. But of the destruction there is no doubt. No wonder Richard de Bury accounted war among the chief enemies of books.

But it is unnecessary to go so far back. In the first year of our Library's existence at Ann Arbor, a distinguished Russian bibliophile spent several hours with us. He told the tale of a great library

in Moscow, which, in the estimation of some Soviet Commissar, was occupying too much space. So the bolshevik official held the office force of the ministry of food-supplies over one Saturday afternoon and turned them loose in the library to "consolidate" the books on to fewer shelves. They did. In one short afternoon's work they undid the usefulness of a library built up during centuries of work. This is not a tale of destruction. Destruction was unnecessary. When he saw the havoc he had wrought, the Commissar naively called in our visitor to bring order out of the chaos produced by a lot of stenographers and clerks re-arranging a library in the interests of "economy." Our visitor's only comment was, "Shortly thereafter I escaped from Russia."

When in 1919 Bela Kun and his fellow Communists got possession of the Government of Hungary, it is reported that they insisted on burning as much of the old capitalist literature of history, economics and politics as they could find. A few months later the present administration of Regent Horthy turned the Communists out and it is recorded that it celebrated the return of capitalism by burning many books in the Budapest Library which represented the new heresies of socialism and communism. A few more such enthusiastic political revivals and Budapest will not be a very good place for research.

During the past winter there came a visitor to our library who had been in a position to know

something of the affairs of Ireland during the stormy times. He related the story of how the Sinn-Feiners were driven into the public record office of Dublin by the Free State troops, and when they found themselves hopelessly defeated, thought to avenge theselves by burning the precious records of Ireland from early times. Here is one crime against Irish civilization which can hardly be charged to the English.

But it is easy to see the faults of others. One of the most important sources of raw materials for investigators in history, economics and political science are the collections of vital statistics which any government may be expected to keep. There are no general dependable vital statistics in the United States before the first census of 1790. Therefore the records of that first census are precious beyond calculation. Where are they? Burned, and burned within the past five years because the government of the United States, the richest in the world, has not yet seen fit to appropriate money for a public archives building. The most insignificant of European countries have such repositories, but the great United States is not yet sufficiently enlightened to care for its public records in a separate and fire-proof building.

Any book-collector could multiply stories of this sort endlessly, stories of Caxtons torn apart to wrap up fish and butter, stories of the precious DeBry engravings from the priceless Hariot's Virginia, cut up to make patterns for a tailor, stories

A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia: of *the commodities there found and to be rayſed, as well marchantable, as others for victuall, building and other neceſſarie vſes for thoſe that are and ſhalbe the planters there; and of the nature and manners of the naturall inhabitants*: Diſcouered by the *Engliſh Colony there ſeated by* Sir Richard Greinuile *Knight in the* yeere 1585. which remained vnder the gouernment of Raſe Lane Eſquier, *one of her Maieſties Equieres, during the ſpace of twelue monethes; at* the ſpeciall charge and direction of the Honourable SIR WALTER RALEIGH Knight, Lord Warden of the ſtanneries; who therein hath beene fauoured and authoriſed by her Maieſtie and her letters patents:

Directed to the Aduenturers, Fauourers, *and Welwillers of the action, for the inhabiting and planting there:*

By *Thomas Hariot*; ſeruant to the abouenamed *Sir Walter, a member of the Colony, and there imployed in diſcouering.*

Imprinted at London 1588.

FIRST ENGLISH BOOK ON THE FIRST ENGLISH SETTLEMENT IN AMERICA

of beautiful seventeenth and eighteenth century books torn apart that their armorial binding might be used to make cigarette boxes, scrap-baskets or writing cases, and sold in the so-called "Art Departments" of the department stores. But why go on? Surely enough has been said to make clear that as long as human beings are what they are, we need to foster a cult whose duty it is to preserve books and manuscripts, and we need buildings in which that can be done in a fitting manner. They are to be preserved for the scholar and he is always more than welcome in such libraries as ours. But no one would, I believe, advocate that the irreplaceable treasures of the past be entrusted to persons who are not yet equipped to handle them.

This University, let me repeat, and all universities, are interested in increasing the number of people who are competent to use a library of rare books. That is one reason why the library has been entrusted to the University of Michigan. But I think no one will deny that there are thousands here at the university (as at every university in the land) who have not yet prepared themselves so that they are fit to be entrusted with the rare volumes to be found in the William L. Clements Library.

In the administration of such a library as this, it is imperative that certain conditions be laid down under which the books may be used. I have yet to find any one who is really trained to use the library who has the slightest objection to the formalities

we impose. Such complaints as there are come altogether from another quarter. I was very much interested in the accounts given by the Librarian of our University Library, Mr. Bishop, of the reception he met last summer when he visited the great Italian Libraries at Rome, Florence and Venice. Although Mr. Bishop was known personally and by reputation to the custodians of these collections, yet they imposed upon him the same restrictions which they imposed upon anyone else. Before he was permitted to use the volumes, in the Vatican Library, he was required to present a letter of introduction from the American Ambassador at Rome. Similar restrictions are in force wherever there are rare books.

As to readers, the Library follows as liberal a policy as, I believe, can be found anywhere in the world. We are open forenoon and afternoon to serious scholars on all week days. The general public and the casual visitor present another kind of a problem. To them the Main Room is open every afternoon from two until five. This is a more liberal policy than that adopted at the John Rylands Library at Manchester, one of the greatest in England, which admits the general public only two afternoons a week. I would not have this interpreted as in any sense a reflection on the John Rylands Library. It is simply an evidence of how the appreciative librarian feels about his books. Casual visitors are necessarily confined to our Main Room from which they can see all that

could be of interest to them. From it they can see into the Rare Book Room and view the other parts of the Main Room with its tasteful furniture, upholstery and hangings. The reason for equipping the Library with very handsome but harmonious furnishings is a very simple one—any works of art can be ruined by an improper setting, and the subtitle of this essay indicates how the true book lover regards his books. Yet that very setting must be cared for as the Library itself. One example will, I believe, make this clear. At one time two of the handsome chairs, upholstered in light blue silk velvet, were placed inside the silken ropes which separate the rest of the Main Room from that part to which visitors are admitted. A lady sought refuge in the Library from a rainstorm and sat down in one of these chairs in a drenching wet raincoat. As long as there are ladies of that sort—the Library must protect itself against them.

Of course upon occasions when the Main Room of the Library is used for talks and other affairs held there to stimulate interest in bibliography, book-collecting and American history, the furniture is for use. At those times people of appreciation are invited to the Library and all the Library's resources are available to satisfy whatever interest they may have in helping to realize the ideals which the founder of this Library had in mind when he placed his books here.

But let us return to the books. It has already been said that this is primarily a collection of the

¶ Epistola Christofori Colom: cui etas nostra multū debet: de Insulis Indie supra Gangem nuper inuētis. Ad quas peregrēdas octauo antea mense auspiciis ꝛ ere inuictissimoꝝ Fernādi ꝛ Helisabet Hispaniaꝝ Regū missus fuerat: ad magnificum dñm Gabrielem Sanchis eorundē serenissimoꝝ Regum Thesaurariū missa: quā nobilis ac litteratus vir Leander de Cosco ab Hispanico idiomate in latinum cōuertit tertio kal's Maii. M. cccc. xciii. Pontificatus Alexandri Sexti Anno primo.

QUoniam suscepte prouintie rem perfectam me ꝓsecutum fuisse gratum tibi fore scio: bas constitui exarare: que te vniuersa inuenta ꝗ in hoc nostro itinere geste fuerint ꝗ admoneant. Tricesimotertio die postq̄ Gadibus discessi in mare Indicū perueni: vbi plurimas insulas innumeris habitatas hominibus repperi: quarum omnium ꝓ felicissimo Rege nostro preconio celebrato ꝗ vexillis extensis contradicente nemine possessionem accepi: primeq; earum diui Saluatoris nomen imposui: cuius fretus auxilio tam ad hanc: q̄ ad ceteras alias peruenimus. Eam ꝙ Indi Guanahanin vocant. Aliarū etiam vnam quamq; nouo nomine nuncupaui: quippe aliā insulam Sancte Marie Conceptionis. aliam Fernandinam. aliam Ysabellam. aliam Joanam. ꝗ sic de reliquis appellari iussi. Cum primum in eam insulam quam dudum Joanam vocari dixi appulimus: iuxta cuius litus occidentem versus aliquantulum processi: tamq; eam magnam nullo reperto fine inuenī: vt non insulā: sed continentem Chatai prouinciam esse crediderim: nulla tñ videns oppida municipiaue in maritimis sita confiniū ꝓter aliquos vicos ꝗ predia rustica: cum quoq; incolis loqui nequibam. quare illuc ac nos videbant fugiebant fugam. Progrediebar vltra existimans aliquā me vrbem villasue inuenturū. Deniq; videns ꝙ longe admodum progressis nihil noui emergebat: ꝗ hmōi via nos ad Septentrionem deferebat: ꝙ ipse fugere exoptabā: terris etenim regnabat bruma: ad Austrum; erat in voto cōtendere:

sources of American history, and as it is one of our aims to work in the closest harmony and co-operation with the University Library it is only natural that we should strive to secure those volumes which the University Library frequently cannot afford. In the case of American history these would necessarily be the books published long ago, and consequently our specialty has been in the earlier periods of American history. We must secure for Michigan those books which, on account of their extreme rarity, are so rapidly going off the market that unless a department of the University is making a particular business of getting them, twenty or thirty years from now it will be impossible to secure them at any price.

Let two examples suffice of such important books. When Columbus returned from his first voyage in 1493 he wrote a short letter describing what he had found. It is the first printed document in American history as such. Although printing was in its infancy, having been invented less than fifty years before, the popularity of this "Columbus Letter" was so great that it ran through eleven editions in the year of its first publication. When we think of the difficulties of printing in those days, that is a remarkable record. But its record of popularity is even greater than those figures would indicate, for those editions came not all from one press. Printers in Barcelona, Rome, Paris, Basle, Florence and Antwerp all produced editions of the Columbus Letter in

Capadociam/Pamphiliam/Lidiã/Cilicią/Armenias maiorem & minorem. Colchiden/Hircaniam Hiberiam/Albaniam:& præterea multas quas ſingillatim enumerare longa mora eſſet. Ita dicta ab eius nominis regina.

Nunc vero & heę partes ſunt latius luſtratæ/& alia quarta pars per Americũ Veſputium(vt in ſequentibus audietur)inuenta eſt:quã non video cur quis iure vetet ab Americo inuentore ſagacis ingenij viro Amerigen quaſi Ameriti terram/ſiue Americam dicendam:cum & Europa & Aſia a mulieribus ſua ſortita ſint nomina. Eius ſitũ & gentis mores ex bis binis Americi nauigationibus quę ſequũtur liquide intelligi datur.

Ameſtico

Hunc in modum terra iam quadripartita cognoſcitur: & ſunt tres primæ partes cõtinentes: quarta eſt inſula: cum omni quãq; mari circũdata cõſpicitur. Et licet mare vnũ ſit quẽadmodum & ipſa telluſ:multis tamen ſinibus diſtinctum/& innumeris repletum inſulis varia ſibi noia aſſumit:quæ in Coſmographię tabulis conſpiciuntur: & Priſcianus in tralatione Dioniſij talibus enumerat verſibus.

Priſcia.

Circuit Oceani gurges tamen vndiq; vaſtus
Qui q̃uis vnus ſit/plurima nomina ſumit.
Finibus Heſperijs Athlanticus ille vocatur
At Boreę qua gens furit Armiaſpa ſub armis
Dicit ille piger necnon Satur. idẽ mortuus eſt alijs:

THE PAGE FROM WALDSEEMUELLER'S "COSMOGRAPHIAE INTRODUCTIO" FROM WHICH AMERICA RECEIVED ITS NAME.

that year. Yet of all of those editions only a very few of each survice. Of the first edition but one is known in the entire world. Our Library has a beautiful copy of the third edition, from the library of Henry Huth. Mr. Wilberforce Eames notes that there are only twenty surviving copies of this edition. Upon the rare occasions when it comes on the market, it brings thousands of dollars. Is that a book to be handed out to every curiosity seeker? Is it a plaything to be "put on special reference?"

Nearby on the same shelf is a copy of the 1507 edition of Waldseemüller's *Cosmographiae Introductio,* wherein that well-intentioned but misinformed school-master suggested that since Amerigo Vespucci had discovered the New World it ought to be named after him, America. Is that an important book? But for it, we might never have been mis-named Americans. On account of one short paragraph in this little book printed in a tiny town in the Vosges Mountains four hundred years ago, two mighty continents got the wrong name—and the truth has never overtaken error. It is difficult to assess the value of such a book. No History of America has ever been written or ever can be written without not only referring to this book, but actually mentioning it by name. Can we afford to leave that on an open shelf to be handled by every chance visitor to the Library? If we did so we would not long have it to show to the real scholar who has a genuine claim to see it.

A similar story could be told of thousands of

other books on the shelves of the William L. Clements Library. Should such volumes be placed where the students can get at them? Let me make a distinction. In the modern University there are some of us who draw a very sharp line between "students" and "scholars." This Library is intended for the use of scholars, but no one is likely to say that all students are scholars. Indeed, I am inclined to think, and this is only a personal opinion, that the vast majority of students are not scholars. No, the Library and its books are not for the use of the students. The conclusion as to their relation to this Library is inevitable.

Moreover, there are instructors and professors in the University who do not scruple to demand that the University Library "put on special reference" a periodical of which the Library has but one copy, that several hundred underclassmen may read a two-page article on the minimum wage, or some such subject. After three or four hundred students have pawed over the volume it is frequently never again available for the man who has a legitimate claim to use it. Too often the leaves are entirely cut out. It is not necessary to remark that that professor might have provided a dozen photostats of that article for a few cents each. As long as there are such instructors and professors, our Library proposes to protect itself against them. In addition to this there are readers on the campus who seem unable to sit down with a book without underlining passages in pencil, or cutting out

maps or pictures which appeal to them. As long as such readers are at large, this Library proposes to maintain its defences.

On being asked by Mr. Clements to accept this position, I remarked that the task seemed to be one of mediating between being hospitable and being careful. I believe that statement is not far from the truth. As long as I remain here, I intend to make my mistakes in the matter of hospitality rather than in the matter of care. An error in hospitality can be rectified by an apology or other explanation. A mistake in care may be absolutely impossible to rectify, if a unique volume is lost or damaged. Therefore the Library does not propose to take any chances whatever in entrusting its treasures to those who are not properly introduced, or who by their manners or actions do not commend themselves as trustworthy.

In an ordinary library a volume lost may be replaced. In our Library, in all probability, a book cannot be replaced for the simple reason that a duplicate does not exist for sale. A public library is an indispensable necessity in a democracy, but this is another kind of library. When a higher stage of civilization has been reached, when men of wealth, culture and refinement have a little more leisure than is possible in the lower stages of human progress, we always find another type of library springing up. Italy, France and England have had such libraries for centuries and as culture and civilization have made their way in America, such

libraries have appeared in Philadelphia, New York, Boston and elsewhere. In those libraries the original collector treats his books with a meticulous care which they merit. As time has gone on collectors have become more and more fastidious about the volumes they are willing to admit to their shelves. Defective copies of books, books of which the margins of the pages have been trimmed by the binder's knife—these are the abomination of the collector. What difference does it make? What difference does it make whether your linen is soiled or your shoes unpolished?

Many of these collections, built with great sacrifice and persistence by some enthusiastic collector, find their way ultimately to a public institution. There they get into the hands of employees who are seldom better informed than the multitude itself as to the value of books, or possessed of any greater appreciation of the fine points of a book. Then we have the tragedy of a great library allowed to degenerate in the hands of the enemies of books, careless human beings, against whom Richard de Bury wrote his *Philobiblon* five hundred years ago. No wonder every new generation of book-collectors republishes the *Philobiblon.* An understanding of its contents and principles ought to be a "prerequisite for admission" to such libraries as ours. One of the purposes of our Library is to help foster a generation of people who can go out and take care of the increasing number of libraries of this sort, a profession which can relieve the col-

lector from the details of the arrangement of his library and leave him free to gather in more books. But such a person must have the feeling that the collector himself has for his books. The qualifications for such a position are more than those of proficiency in Library School training. Ours is a Library of twenty thousand volumes without any little paper labels defacing the backs of the books to indicate classifications, and without any call numbers on the catalogue cards.

But let us consider the collector himself. I wish some industrious person would write a book on the immense debt that civilization owes to the man who amasses books, if he never does anything else. The books which the genuine collector will admit to his shelves are only important books. Few people are interested in collecting unimportant books. People of that calibre are collecting cigar bands and milk tops. But the point is that it is not for the multitude to say what are important books. What constitutes an important books is a matter of considerable study, and the book-collector makes it his business to master that subject. If he knows that a book is important, his opinion is apt to be worth more than that of the man in the street. Indeed it is not long before others bear eloquent tribute to the correctness of his knowledge by imitating his collection. If he does nothing but make the collection, he has accomplished a life work. The exploitation of the collection can safely be left to those less courageous individuals who write books

THE
Day of Doom;
OR,
A Poetical Deſcription of the
Great and Laſt
Judgment.
With a ſhort Diſcourſe about
ETERNITY

By *Michael Wiggleſworth*, A. M. Teacher of the Church in *Maldon*, *New-England*.

The Seventh Edition, Enlarged.

With a Recommendatory *Epiſtle* (in Verſe) by the Rev Mr. *John Mitchel* Alſo Mr. *Wiggleſworth*'s Character by Dr COTTON MATHER.

Acts 17 31. *Becauſe he hath appointed a Day in the which he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by that Man whom he hath ordained.*——

Mat 24. 30. *And then ſhall appear the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, and then ſhall all the Tribes of the Earth mourn, and they ſhall ſee the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven, with Power and great Glory.*

BOSTON Printed and ſold by *Thomas Fleet*, at the Heart and Crown in Cornhill. 1751.

TITLE-PAGE OF WIGGLESWORTH'S "DAY OF DOOM."

"No narrative of our intellectual history during the colonial days can justly fail to record the enormous influence of this terrible poem during all those times." MOSES COIT TYLER.

from the sources to be found in the collector's library. I call them "less courageous" because they take no chances, they do not sacrifice all other earthly treasures in the building up of the library which they are privileged to enjoy. Moreover they are in most cases people with good analytic minds who can best use the collection—but then many people have that kind of mind. The mind of the collector is essentially synthetic and imaginative. He sees without logical processes the importance of a book before the patient investigator finds the reason for its importance. In a very real sense the collector frequently foresees the importance of a book before the writer of a dissertation thereon. Indeed the investigator probably would never see the book if the collector had not rescued it. However, volumes could be written on this subject.

Let us consider this matter of importance a little further. If a book has been read by thousands of people, and published in dozens of different editions, it would be hard to deny that it had some influence. Its influence on the course of human progress is one of the things that makes it an important book. But it is just those books which are often the rarest, which bring the highest prices, and which are the most eagerly sought after by the collector. One illustration will suffice here. On our shelves there is a small volume in a broken binding, and not in the fresh condition the collector most desires, but carefully preserved in a morocco slipcase. It is entitled "The Day of

Doom" and was written by the Reverend Michael Wigglesworth, and published at Boston in 1715. It is a little bit of New England religious poetry, but it has molded the thought of America as positively and as effectively as almost any book of its day. Of this "blazing and sulphurous" volume, Moses Coit Tyler has said, "This great poem, which with entire unconsciousness, attributes to the Divine Being a character the most execrable and loathsome to be met with, perhaps in any literature, Christian or Pagan, had for a hundred years a popularity far exceeding any other work, in prose or verse, produced in America before the Revolution." But we have no copy of the first edition —nor of the second, nor the third, nor the fourth, nor the fifth. Where are they all? They were so popular that they were read to pieces. One of our copies is the sixth edition. Some years ago Mr. Clements came across a copy of the seventh edition, its binding in tatters, but he paid a large sum for it and entrusted it to the English binder Riviere that it might be reverently covered with a new morocco binding as sumptuous as the importance of such a work demanded. If you would understand the "Puritan Conscience" which has so powerfully molded American thought these three hundred years, you must go to this little book.

That is what a collector means by an important book,—a book which has helped to change history, a book which has had a real part in the creation of our civilization and in the indicating of the path of

our progress. One of the ideals of the William L. Clements Library is to have no other books than these upon its shelves—and of necessity they are often rare books as well. Unless the few surviving copies of these books are placed beyond the reach of all save those who are qualified to use them, there will soon be none left.

But I would emphasize the work of the collector as such. Recently the newspapers carried articles about the purchase of a portrait of Giuliano di Medici by Raphael for many thousands of dollars. Whereupon editorial writers set to work to scoff at another ignorant rich man who was trying to "make a record" in squandering his money. But who was this Medici? He was a member of a great dynasty of Renaissance bankers whose collections of books and pictures were and are among the greatest the world has known. Giovanni de Medici was a fifteenth century J. Pierpont Morgan. Cosimo di Medici, his son, was a successful political boss as well as an astute banker. As only rich men can, they amassed great numbers of books. Doubtless the small-minded among the Florentines of their day scoffed at them as *nouveaux riches* who could not understand what they had bought. Lorenzo and the second Giuliano di Medici belong to later generations and they carried on the artistic tradition of a great family. Today the city of Florence is a mecca to which thousands of book-lovers and art-lovers make their yearly pilgrimage to see—what? The collections of the

Medici and other great Florentine collectors. It is not recorded that any of the Medici were required to write a doctoral dissertation to prove that they understood the books which they were collecting. It is enough that they were collectors, and thousands of dissertations have been written because they spent huge sums on works of art. Among the thousands who annually visit Florence to gaze upon the books of the Medici, there are doubtless those who go home to jeer at the modern Medicis who are building in America the libraries and art-galleries which will in the future become focal points of American culture.

A. Edward Newton once put to me the question: "Where would culture be without the collector?" The Italian Renaissance itself supplies the answer to that question. That great epoch, the closing chapter of Medieval History, the opening act of the drama of modern times, what was it? I should not like to argue to any good medievalist that the Renaissance was due solely to the book-collectors—but I should cheerfully defy any medievalist to write the story of the Renaissance and leave out the part played by Petrarch, Boccaccio and their followers in hunting down the Latin manuscripts. I should like to see him try to outline the Renaissance and omit the part played by Pope Nicholas V and Frederick of Urbino in gathering those precious treasures which Petrarch's enthusiasm uncovered, and importing Greek books from Constantinople in time to save them from destruc-

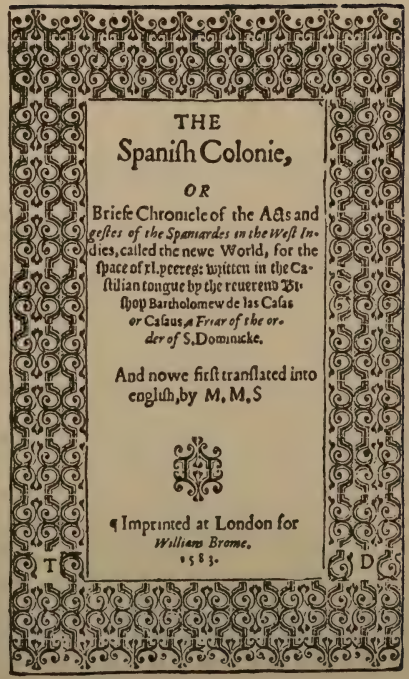
tion by the Turk. From these collections came the great Vatican Library. One might revert to the Medici here again, but the story is too well known. Perhaps there would be some culture in the world without book-collectors, but I should not like to have to maintain it.

The part played in the history of book-collecting by the donor of our Library is in more than one way comparable to that of the great actors of the Renaissance. A number of great and devastating wars in the Near East threw thousands of the precious Greek manuscript codices on the market in the fifteenth century. Had the great Italian collectors not bought them up and stored them in the libraries of Florence, Rome and Venice, they might not have survived. It was a golden opportunity for the collector, and a critical moment for civilization. Fortunately the wealthy Italian bankers and noblemen saved the day.

In 1914 another great war threw on the market thousands of rare books, and among them were thousands which were of first importance to American history. In quick succession in England alone the Rowfant, the Bridgewater, the Devonshire and the Britwell or Christie-Miller collections went under the hammer of the auctioneer. The keen-eyed American collector saw his chance. He would repeat for America what the Italians of the Quattrocento had done to make Italy a great center of literary research. Hundreds and thousands of these precious books found their way across the

¶ Breuissima rela
cion de la destruycion de las In-
dias: colegida por el Obispo dõ
fray Bartolome de las Casas, o
Casaus de la orden de Sãcto Do
mingo.
Año. 1552.

First Spanish edition, 1552



THE
Spanish Colonie,
OR
Briefe Chronicle of the Acts and
gestes of the Spaniardes in the West In-
dies, called the newe World, for the
space of xl. yeeres: written in the Ca-
stilian tongue by the reuerend Bi-
shop Bartholomew de las Casas
or Casaus, *a Friar of the or-*
der of S. Dominicke.

And nowe first translated into
english, by M. M. S

¶ Imprinted at London for
William Brome.
1583.

First English edition, 1583

LAS CASAS' FIRST TRACT

A book which has influenced thought during four centuries. From it may come many of our notions of Spanish cruelty toward the Indians.

Atlantic into such libraries of rare books as Mr. Clements was building up at Bay City, Michigan. It was not merely the chance of a lifetime, it was the opportunity of centuries. The acquisition of the political papers of Earl Shelburne was characteristic of many of the incidents which are part of the history of the collection. This great body of manuscripts—more than two hundred folios—contained priceless source material for American history such as was only to be found in the private archives of the man who had been Colonial Minister, Foreign Minister and finally Prime Minister of England, off and on for fifty years during the eighteenth century. Shelburne had been an administrator of colonial affairs while the United States was a part of the British Empire, and under his administration as head of the British government had been negotiated the Peace of 1783 between Great Britain and the United States. What may not those folios contain? But the point is that when they finally yield their secrets to the American historical investigator, it will be impossible to overlook the debt which the investigator owes to the book-collector.

With years of persistent search and loyalty to his subject the collector at Bay City had been building up his collection of rare books in American history of the Discovery, Colonial and Revolutionary periods. When those opportunities came as a result of the war, America was fortunate to have such men to take advantage of them. But

thrice fortunate is the University which suddenly finds itself possessed of a great library made by one of these collectors. Not yet perhaps comparable in many ways to the collections of rarities in the Bodleian at Oxford, or the Laurentian at Florence, which have had years' and even centuries' start on it, yet it is an American library and being American the future belongs to it. In its chosen field it is second to none in Europe and ranks among the four or five of its kind in America. Individual comparisons among these will always be impossible because they specialize in different aspects of Americana.

But I cannot leave the book-collector without a word of tribute to the book-dealer, the man who unearths the treasures which the collector stores up for mankind. What we know of the collectors of the Italian Renaissance is due very largely to the letters of one Vespasiano di Bistricci, an Italian fifteenth century book-seller. He found the books for the Medici, for Pope Nicholas V and sold them —at a profit, and who will deny that he earned the profit? Duke Frederick of Urbino bought largely from Vespasiano and then decided it was more discreet to employ him as a custodian and put him on a salary. It was a wise choice, as every book-collector will agree. What Vespasiano did for the Italians, that did the first Henry Stevens for the American collectors, James Lenox and John Carter Brown, whose collections have become the foundations of two of the greatest of American

libraries. Indeed the only book written on James Lenox as a collector was written by Henry Stevens.

When Dr. Rosenbach goes abroad and buys a single tract for thirty-five thousand dollars, he is a great deal more than a book-dealer. He represents the cult of the book-collector, and he believes in the book enough to sink a small fortune in it. When he resells, the thing that interests the historians of civilization is not what profit is made but the fact that the book will help to build up a great library somewhere. In writing his volume on this Library, Mr. Clements has taken pains to express the thanks that are due to his book-seller friends, Lathrop C. Harper of New York and Henry N. Stevens of London. It is impossible to avoid the part played by the book-seller in the art of book-collecting from the time of Vespasiano to that of these men and their colleagues and competitors.

Moreover, the book-seller does us this great service: he prints catalogues of his wares. When the morning's mail brings a sheaf of them to my desk, I have that delightful sensation which comes only to those who make their living doing what is also their greatest pleasure. In the middle of the morning recently I found one of the members of the staff of the Library busily devouring one of Tregaskis' catalogues. In ordinary office routine I should have frowned upon such an expenditure of "the company's time." But I feel this is just one of the contrasts between our Library and an ordinary library. That girl has her job because she

can suspend work and get lost in a second-hand catalogue of Americana. I would not print her name lest some other library like this try to get her for the very reason that she can read second-hand book catalogues with discrimination. The bibliographer owes a great debt to the book-seller.

Such is the contribution made to the progress of humanity by the collector, and especially the collector of books. These collectors' libraries are not mere sources of information—they are sources of inspiration. Such a library has now appeared at Michigan, and its donor intends to profit by the mistakes of others and see to it that his treasures are available only to those whose reputation and training entitles them to call for his books. He was urged by some of his book-loving friends not to think of giving his books to a public institution, on the ground that public institutions were notorious in their inability to care for such priceless human records. He has shown an extraordinary degree of loyalty to his Alma Mater and confidence in her by giving his books to his University. The least his University can do in return for his superb gift is to respect his ideals.

Printed at the Alumni Press, University of Michigan, September 1925. One thousand copies, of which two hundred were bound in board and eight hundred in paper covers.

Z733.M624 A25 1925